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# The Annuitant

A publication of the UIUC Chapter  
State Universities Annuitants Association

Fall 2021

Carol Livingstone, Editor

## Fall Membership Meeting October 24

**Speaker: Prof. J. Fred Giertz**

*H. F. (Bill) Williamson*

The SUAA-UIUC Chapter annual fall meeting will be held on Sunday, October 24 from 1:30 to 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held via Zoom (details on p. 15 and on the SUAA-UIUC website). Starting at 1:30 p.m., participants are welcome to join the Zoom session and chat informally. At 2:00 p.m., Professor J. Fred Giertz will talk on "The Financial Status of the State of Illinois and Our Pensions." Few topics are of



*J. Fred Giertz*

more interest and importance to UI retirees and employees. Professor Giertz is one of the foremost authorities on economic conditions and a current member of the SURS Board of Directors.

the expert to interview on how the State of Illinois' economy is doing. He is sought out for his expertise because he is the creator with another colleague of the "Flash Index of Economic Growth" that provides unbiased and informative news on the state of the Illinois economy. Professor Giertz

*(Continued on page 3)*

## President's Report

*John Marlin*

As fall approaches and I begin my second term, I am pleased to report that the pension system has survived another legislative session. Various legislators and organizations kept the media filled with concern over pension benefits. It is imperative that we keep our guard up as the attacks are not likely to decrease in the coming years.

Early optimism this spring about COVID-19 coming under control has greatly diminished. Accordingly, our chapter is continuing to meet via Zoom. We will follow public health and campus protocols as best we can. Vaccination remains our best hope of beating this virus. The current news casts bring back vivid memories of me getting a polio shot in the 1950's and seeing pictures of rooms full of children in iron lungs.

**Chapter leadership:** I am pleased to welcome a new member to the Executive Committee of our chapter – Matt Wilson. Matt was Director of Development in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and then held senior positions at the UI Foundation and the Alumni Association. Now retired from the UI, Matt is a wealth advisor for the Chicago firm of William Blair & Co. I'm also pleased that members reelected Marissa Brooke Brewer, Deb Stone, and Wynne Sandra Korr to the Executive Committee for second three-year terms, all of whom bring extensive experience at the UI and knowledge of issues related to the SURS pension system.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## **SUAA-UIUC CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

**2021-22**

*Committee assignments are shown in italics*

### **~ OFFICERS ~**

#### **President**

John Marlin\* - *Program*

#### **Vice President**

Wynne S. Korr\* - *Legislative*

#### **Secretary**

Debbie Kemphues\* - *Secretary/Membership*

#### **Treasurer**

Ron Webbink

### **~ OTHER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ~**

William Adams\* - *Legislative*

Marissa Brewer\* - *Communications*

Melinda Carr\* - *Membership*

Bettina Francis\* - *Communications*

Carol Livingstone\* - *Communications,  
Newsletter and Webmaster*

Donna Miller\* - *Program*

Deb Stone\* - *Benefits*

H. F. (Bill) Williamson\* - *Benefits/Membership*

Matthew J. Wilson\*

\*member of Executive Committee

### **~ OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS ~**

Thomas Conry - *Legislative*

Robert Rich - *Legislative*

Rick Schoell - *Legislative*

H. F. (Bill) Williamson - *Benefits/Membership*

Richard Winkel - *Legislative*

### **~ LIAISONS ~**

Cheryl Heck - *Campus*

Kathleen Holden - *Clark-Lindsey*

### **~ STATE SUAA LEADERSHIP ~**

Thomas Conry - *State Vice President*

H. F. (Bill) Williamson - *SUAA Foundation*

*(President's report, continued from first page)*

I also note with some sadness that several long-time Executive Committee members have stepped down from their elected positions. Kathleen Holden and Steve Rugg both served many years and in many positions on the Executive Committee. I thank them for their dedication and service. Kathleen intends to serve in a non-elected position as liaison to Clark-Lindsay, where the Executive Committee will meet – once the pandemic restrictions have been lifted. Athalia Hunt resigned as campus liaison. Cheryl Heck has stepped up to fill that position. I should also mention that Barb Hartman and Mary Beastall have stepped down from their committee work (Membership/Benefits). Both served as past SUAA presidents.

**Committees:** Early last year, the Executive Committee had formed a Long-Range Planning Committee to examine whether our committee structure could be improved. This work was sidelined by the pandemic but now will proceed under the leadership of William Adams.

Most of the work of the chapter is done through its committee structure, and you don't need to be on the Executive Committee to serve on a committee. If you are interested in helping the chapter, please consider joining one – the Benefits, Communications, Legislative, Membership, and Program Committees all welcome additional members. Contact any of the officers on a committee (see sidebar) or send me a note at [president@suaa-ui.org](mailto:president@suaa-ui.org) and I'll connect you to the committee chair. Serving on a committee is a great way to learn more about how our chapter works and to influence our direction for the future.

**Membership:** The strength of our chapter is in our membership. If you are a current member, I encourage you to reach out to your friends who are in the SURS pension system to encourage them to join; if you are not a member, please consider joining SUAA. Page 12 has information on how to join. Many UI staff members retired in the past year and now depend on their pensions and health benefits. I believe strongly that SUAA, as the only organization wholly dedicated to protecting your retirement, deserves your support.

*(Giertz, continued from page 1)*

received the Campus Award for Excellence in Public Service for the creation of the index and subsequent reporting of its indications of economic health. It has been observed that the index is used by newspapers around the state, radio and TV stations and economists in Chicago and the State government, itself.

In 1990 he served on the budget subcommittee of Governor Jim Edgar's transition team and, then, as an advisor on economic issues to the Illinois Bureau of the Budget. He served on the SURS Board of Trustees as an appointee from 1995 until 2005, an active elected member from 2009 until 2012, and an annuitant elected member from 2015. He was re-elected to the latter position this year for a second six-year term. Professor Giertz is a well published expert on tax issues. He has been Executive Director of the National Tax Association, the President of the Illinois Economic Association, Vice President of the Midwest Economics Association, and on the editorial board for the Quarterly Review of Economics and Business.

When he retired, he was on the faculty of the Department of Economics and Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois. Questions will be welcome following his presentation, and a short business meeting will follow.

## **Volunteer Corner**

### ***Illinois Connection –***

#### ***Help Spread the UI Story***

The UI Office of Governmental Relations has created a new program to advocate for greater federal and state support for the university. Volunteers contact legislators and officers in governmental positions to share the positive impacts the university has on the state, nation, and, indeed, the world.

Legislators appreciate – and often act on – the direct contact from their constituents about issues that concern them. If you are interested in helping with this effort, visit the [Illinois Connection website](http://illinoisconnection.org) or email them at [illinoisconnection@uillinois.edu](mailto:illinoisconnection@uillinois.edu).



## ***Seeking a co-editor for this newsletter***

*Carol Livingstone*

I am moving out of Champaign-Urbana and would appreciate someone local to help with this newsletter.



If you love writing and appreciate the great work this organization does, you could help by attending meetings (when we return to in-person meetings!), taking photographs, writing articles of interest to our constituents, and working with the printer and mailing center.

If you'd like to help, contact me at [webmaster@suaa-ui.org](mailto:webmaster@suaa-ui.org)

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## ***Spring, 2021 Meeting Keynote Speaker: Executive Vice President Barbara Wilson***

*Carol Livingstone*

UI Executive Vice President Barbara Wilson was the keynote speaker at the April 24, 2021 meeting of the SUAA-UIUC chapter, which was held via Zoom due to the pandemic. She outlined the breadth and scope of the UI, with more than 90,000 students and over a billion dollars in research funding. The UI system pumps \$17.5 billion into the Illinois economy annually, supporting one of every 46 jobs in the state, facts which the UI administration emphasizes in discussions with state legislators.

Vice President Wilson described the UI's efforts to fight the COVID-19

pandemic. The saliva-based COVID-19 test developed at the Urbana-Champaign campus will be adopted by over 100 different organizations within the state – it has been offered to all K-12 and higher education institutions in the state and many other organizations nationwide. College of Engineering faculty and students have designed an inexpensive ventilator system for COVID

patients which is now being shipped all over the world. UI epidemiologists have collaborated in modeling the spread of the disease and have developed effective targeting and tracing tools. UIC's hospital system and medical school has participated in clinical trials of vaccines and has assisted the Illinois Department of Public Health. The Board of Trustees approved early graduation for the students in the medical school to increase the number of health care workers on the front lines of the pandemic. UI faculty, staff and students have extended outreach to Chicago's homeless population to assist them in obtaining

vaccines, and they have worked to counter misinformation about vaccines and the disease. Educational technology faculty and staff at all three campuses have aided the precipitous transition to online learning necessitated by the pandemic, and pioneered ways to allow many employees to work from home.

The UI System estimates that the pandemic response has cost the university more than \$330 million as of March, 2021, of which only \$178 million was reimbursed via the CARES act. Costs continue to climb at the rate of \$20 million per month.



*VP Wilson via Zoom*

Dr. Wilson then turned to the changing landscape of higher education. First, state support of higher education in Illinois has fallen from 31% of costs in 2000 to only 12% in 2021, a trend that is national in scope. Publicly-funded colleges like the UI have responded to reduced state support primarily by increasing tuition and fees, resulting in an affordability crisis and much negative

publicity. The UI has tried to buck the trend of rising higher education costs by freezing undergraduate tuition in six of the past seven years.

Second, the number of high school graduates in Illinois has been steadily declining, and many more students are leaving Illinois for college. Recent estimates show about 40% of high school seniors leave the state for college, and most of these will never return to Illinois after college. This will impact all colleges and universities, who increased capacity to accommodate the number of students graduating in previous years. *(Continued on next page)*

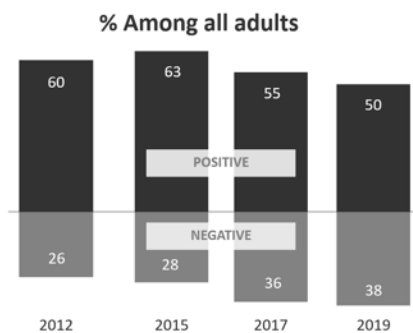
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Third, the demographics of Illinois are changing, where a majority of children are now minorities or of mixed race. Colleges need to be ready to serve these students when they arrive on campus.

Another trend affecting the UI costs is the increasing dependence on technology and the need for increased security in a world where “ransomware” attacks (where a hacker takes over a computer and holds the data hostage until a ransom is paid) are growing. At the UI, 95% of students own a laptop and 97% of students must use a computer for all their classes. She showed a sobering slide from the Pew Research Center showing the increasingly negative perception of higher education by the American public. In just 7 years, the percent of the US population who think higher education has a negative effect on the country rose from 26% to 38%.

## American Perceptions of Higher Education

% of adults saying colleges have a positive/negative effect on the U.S.



Source: Pew Research Center surveys of U.S. adults conducted by telephone July 10-15, 2019, June 8-18, 2017, Sept. 16-Oct. 4, 2015, and Feb. 8-12, 2012.

Emeritus Professor of Psychology William Brewer asked whether faculty on the tenure track were given a rollback on the tenure clock for the disruption caused by the pandemic; Dr. Wilson said yes, although she was concerned about the differences in impact of the pandemic on men and women. Many surveys show that women still bear the brunt of child care and the closing of K-12 schools may therefore impact women more than men.

Prof. Brewer also asked about the prospects of private v. public institutions; Dr. Wilson said that many small

private liberal arts schools may close in the near future, as well as some regional state institutions. She does think big universities like ours are safe. Kathleen Holden asked about administrative cost cutting. Dr. Wilson said that the UI always is looking for ways to cut costs, but many “administrative” costs support instruction, e.g. mental health services, technology costs, and advising for students, so we have to be careful about how to define administrative costs. She also said we have to be smarter about the ways we do business, and cited the use of electronic signatures as a great cost-cutting measure. She said the UI has not laid off any staff members due to the pandemic, a commitment they made to the staff.

Former SUAA-UIUC president Rick Schoell asked about the status of federal and state student aid. The governor’s budget currently holds state MAP (Monetary assistance program) funding level. At the federal level, there is a significant chance of a large increase in Pell grants. The UI, however, is spending more of its own funds on student aid than we receive in state and federal aid.

Executive Committee member Deb Stone asked whether there would be any relief in the regulatory burden imposed by new legislation. Dr. Wilson said this is a long-standing problem, mandates like positive time reporting, annual ethics reporting, procurement requirements, and the Civil Service System all add to our costs. Retired Director of Admissions and Records Carol Malmgren asked whether artificial intelligence advancements might help with administrative costs. Indeed, there may be some improvements in systems as a result.

Dr. Wilson closed with an appeal to the audience to speak up to support the university, with legislators and with community groups to counter the negative news that spreads so quickly. Kathleen Holden mentioned the Illinois Connection, a new effort to link UI community members with legislators with influence on higher education in Illinois (see article on page 3).

A full recording of this keynote address is available on the SUAA-UIUC website: [www.suaa-ui.org](http://www.suaa-ui.org).

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## Benefits Report

Carol Livingstone and Deb Stone

One of the most important services SUAA provides is monitoring changes in benefits programs for SURS annuitants. Members receive monthly briefings detailing bills or proposals before the Illinois Legislature that might affect the pension or benefits of annuitants.

### Benefits Choice Periods

CMS will send information to you for the appropriate Benefits Choice period with detailed information included in the Benefits Choice materials. Members view and may make changes to their coverage through the MyBenefits Marketplace website, but members have the option to call a State group insurance customer service representative (1-844-251-1777 – toll free, or 1-844-251-1778 TDD/TTY). The CMS information should be carefully reviewed. For those eligible for Medicare, the annual CMS Benefits Choice period for the Medicare Advantage TRAIL (Total Retiree Advantage IL) is October 15-November 16 this year, with coverage changes effective January 1. Consult the website for Trail on page 11. The Benefits

Choice for those not eligible for TRAIL is in the spring, usually in May.

### Claim Payment Delays

Funding availability for the Quality Care Health Plan, HealthLink OAP, Aetna OAP and Quality Care Dental Plan is based on State revenue, which fluctuates. A late payment will include an interest payment on claims that take longer than 30 days. Updated information regarding such delays appears on the CMS website under State Employee Benefits (Claim Payment Delays). As of August 26, 2021, delays for most plans were 3 months, longer for non-plan providers.

### COVID-19 testing

If you have a University i-card, you are able to have the saliva-based test for the virus at one of the campus testing sites. The [fall 2020 Annuitant](#) has further information regarding this testing. The Champaign-Urbana Public Health website ([c-uphd.org](http://c-uphd.org)) contains information about COVID-19 and the vaccine availability for those residing in the area.

### COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations

COVID-19 vaccinations are free to all; your local public health district will have information on how to obtain a shot. As we go to print, booster shots have been approved for certain populations -- check with your doctor or the local public health service to see if you are a candidate for a booster.

Annual flu vaccinations are available at no cost to annuitants covered by the state employee health plans. McKinley Health service on campus will provide the flu shots; however, the enhanced flu shot designed for persons 65 and over is not available there. Doctors and pharmacies such as Walgreen's and CVS usually carry the enhanced flu vaccine -- call for an appointment and check availability.

Generally, experts suggest waiting a few weeks between vaccinations, so you may want to consult with your doctor to plan the timing of your flu and COVID-19 shots carefully.

## Legislative Report

Bill Adams

The General Assembly completed its regular session at the end of May and passed the FY22 Budget with the full required annual funding increment for SURS and the other state pension systems.

There continues to be much concern about the long-term sustainability of funding these programs. **There are continued calls for a constitutional amendment to remove protections for state pensions.**

The General Assembly will reconvene for its two normal veto sessions in the fall, and we will closely watch their proposed agendas for any actions that might affect our membership.



# 2021 Campus Charitable Fund Drive - Sept. 22 to Nov. 17

## Just For Retirees

### Frequently Asked Questions about the Campus Charitable Fund Drive

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Thank you for your generosity!

**Q. What are the dates of the 2021 CCFD Campaign?**

- A. The 2021 CCFD Campaign runs from September 22 – November 17, 2021. We will accept contributions from retirees for the 2021 CCFD Campaign up until December 1, 2021.

**Q. How do I donate?**

- A. Complete the Pledge Form and return it with your check or money order. You may also make your pledge online at [ccfd.illinois.edu](http://ccfd.illinois.edu). If your UIN is available, please have that number when you make an online contribution.

**Q. What non-profits can I donate to?**

- A. You may donate to one of the eleven CCFD agencies directly. You may also donate to any of the designated nonprofits listed under each agency. The complete list of CCFD Agencies and their designations can be found at [www.ccf.illinois.edu/agencies](http://www.ccf.illinois.edu/agencies)

**Q. Does my gift count towards the goal for the University Department/Unit from which I retired?**

- A. You may select which department/unit gets credit for your donation. The Retiree Pledge Form has a box to complete regarding whom you would like to receive credit for your contribution.

**Q. How is Release of Information handled?**

- A. You may specify how or if you wish to be contacted. On the Pledge Form, Select one of two boxes:

- ☐ I **DO NOT** wish to be contacted by the Agency
- ☐ I **DO** wish to receive acknowledgement from the Agency for my contribution

**Q. I have given directly to the United Way in the past and plan to continue to do that this year. Can I receive CCFD credit for my direct contribution to United Way?**

- A. If your contribution to United Way occurs during the 2021 CCFD Campaign, it may be counted. CCFD works closely with the United Way of Champaign County to ensure both campaigns give the donor credit for your generous contribution. When giving to United Way, let them know you are a University of Illinois retiree (including department) and would like to receive CCFD credit for your donation. If you give to United Way through the 2021 CCFD Campaign, United Way will be informed of your gift.

**Q. What if I want to give to a charity that is not listed as part of the 11 umbrella agencies?**

- A. In the past, CCFD has accepted Write-In donations to 501(c)3 organizations not listed under our umbrella federations. The Campus Charitable Fund Drive is no longer accepting donations made to other Non-Profit Organizations outside of the campaign. We have upgraded to a new, more complex system and this change will allow us to streamline the process. A full list of almost 700 CCFD-eligible agencies can be found at [ccfd.illinois.edu/agencies](http://ccfd.illinois.edu/agencies)

**Q. Where do I mail or drop off my 2021 CCFD Pledge Form?**

- A. Swanlund Admin Bldg., 5th Floor  
601 E. John St. M/C 304  
Champaign, IL 61820-571

**Q. What if I need more information or have questions?**

- A. Visit [ccfd.illinois.edu](http://ccfd.illinois.edu), send us an email at [ccfd@illinois.edu](mailto:ccfd@illinois.edu) or call us at 217-265-6398

# Participating Agencies



United Way  
of Champaign County

## American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society attacks cancer from every angle by launching breakthrough research and providing support like free rides to chemo, places to stay near hospitals, and our 24/7 helpline. Together with millions of our supporters worldwide, we're saving lives, celebrating lives, and leading the fight for a world without cancer.

(800) 227-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) | 25%

## America's Best Charities

Feeding the hungry. Sheltering the homeless. Protecting the children. And healing the sick. America's Finest independent charities. Working with you to share –the American Way.

(800) 477-0733

[www.best-charities.org](http://www.best-charities.org) | 6.4%

## America's Charities

Working to build strong communities. Addressing needs of children, families, communities through member programs by helping employers and employees support our member charities' programs.

(800) 458-9505

[www.charities.org](http://www.charities.org) | 2.0%

## Black United Fund of Illinois

Raises and utilizes funds to support the growth, development, and empowerment of the African American community. BUF| advocates volunteerism, mutual aid and self-help which are viewed as one way to help break the chronic cycle of economic dependency and social powerlessness that have characterized African American organizations and communities.

(773) 324-0494

[www.bufi.org](http://www.bufi.org) | 4%

## Creating Healthier Communities

Partnering with Illinois' most trusted health and wellness charities to deliver credible health information and efficient charitable giving to employees in the workplace.

(800) 654-0845

[www.chcimpact.org](http://www.chcimpact.org) | 4.8%

## Community Shares of Illinois

We are diverse group of charities with a common mission - to make our world a better place. Our member organizations address the root causes of social problems facing our neighborhoods, our community, and our region.

(217) 352-6533

[www.CommunitySharesIllinois.org](http://www.CommunitySharesIllinois.org) | 23.4%

## EarthShare Illinois

Donations fuel the progress of respected organizations working in Illinois, nationally, and globally to protect our health, air, land, water and wildlife.

(800) 875-3863

[www.earthshare-illinois.org](http://www.earthshare-illinois.org) | 0%

## Global Impact

Inspiring greater giving to foster critical humanitarian development throughout the world; supporting global causes such as disaster response, global health, education and reducing inequalities.

(800) 836-4620

[www.charity.org/give](http://www.charity.org/give) | 3.34%

## Special Olympics Illinois

Special Olympics Illinois provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-style sports, plus Athlete Leadership and Healthy Athlete Programs, for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

(309) 888-2551

[www.soill.org](http://www.soill.org) | 18%

## United Negro College Fund

For more than seven decades, this principle has remained at the heart of UNCF, enabling us to raise more than \$5 billion and help more than 500,000 students and counting not just attend college, but thrive, graduate, and become leaders. More than 170,000 individuals, corporations, and foundations support UNCF's mission, by investing in each year.

(312) 845-2200

[www.uncf.org](http://www.uncf.org) | 12%

## United Way of Champaign County

United Way of Champaign County fights to improve the health, education and financial stability of every person in our community. We are the problems solvers and the hand-raisers, bringing business, government, nonprofits and everyday people together to find solutions to our community's toughest challenges. This year we're focusing on improving Early Grade Level Success, supporting Community Essentials, and breaking down barriers which hold our community back from success.

(217) 352-5151

[www.unitedwaychampaign.org](http://www.unitedwaychampaign.org) | 12.9%



# 2021 Campus Charitable Fund Drive

## Retiree Pledge Form

<b>Name</b> (First and Last)		<b>Email</b> (for CCFD use only)	
<b>Phone</b>	<b>UIN</b> (if available)	<b>Retirement Year</b>	
<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>ZIP</b>
<b>Department Unit</b> University of Illinois Department/Unit to whom you wish this contribution to be credited. You may select the department from which you retired or a department of your choice.		<b>Release Information</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I <b>DO NOT</b> wish to be contacted by the Agency <input type="checkbox"/> I <b>DO</b> wish to receive acknowledgement from the Agency for my contribution	
<b>Select from the 12 Umbrella Agencies:</b> Your check should be payable to one of the 11 Umbrella Agency listed below. If you wish, you may also pay the charity or charities directly and provide CCFD a copy of the receipt with this form. Receipt must reflect that your charitable contribution was made within the dates of CC Fund Drive.			
<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 33%;">American Cancer Society</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Black United Fund of Illinois</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Creating Healthier Communities</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Amerca's Charities</div> <div style="width: 33%;">EarthShare Illinois</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Global Impact</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Community Shares of Illinois</div> <div style="width: 33%;">United Negro College Fund</div> <div style="width: 33%;">United Way of Champaign County</div> <div style="width: 33%;">Special Olympics Illinois</div> <div style="width: 33%;">America's Best Charities</div> </div>			
Many of the 11 Umbrella Agencies allow you to select specific DESIGNATIONS and you may contribute to one or more designations. Complete the form with the name of the Umbrella Agency and then specify the designation and the amount to each designation.			
Umbrella Agency Name			
Designation		Amount	\$
Designation		Amount	\$
Designation		Amount	\$
Designation		Amount	\$
	Total amount for this Umbrella Agency and associated designations		\$
Umbrella Agency Name			
Designation		Amount	\$
Designation		Amount	\$
	Total amount for this Umbrella Agency and associated designations		\$
Send Pledge Form to: <b>Campus Charitable Fund Drive</b> Office of the Chancellor Swanlund Administration Building, MC-304 601 E. John St., Champaign, IL 61820			

*CCFD Insert*

## *Important Sources of Information about Your Pension & Benefits*

### **State Universities Retirement System (SURS)**

**URL:** <http://surs.com/>

**Phone:** (800) 275-7877 or (217) 378-8800

**Fax:** (217) 378-9800

**Mailing Address:** SURS, P.O. Box 2710,  
Champaign, IL 61825-2710

**Street Address:** 1901 Fox Drive, Champaign

SURS is our pension system. Once registered on the website, current employees will have access to historical pay and pension calculators to help plan for retirement. After retirement, annuitants can view information about pension payments and deductions and can update addresses, beneficiaries, phone number, email address, and federal tax withholding status.

During tax season, copies of 1099-R forms can be downloaded from the site.

### **Central Management Services (CMS) (For State Employees)**

**URL:** [illinois.gov/cms/benefits](http://illinois.gov/cms/benefits)

**Phone:** (800) 442-1300 or (866) 277-5669 (TTY)

**Email:** [CMS.Ben.BCS@illinois.gov](mailto:CMS.Ben.BCS@illinois.gov)

CMS negotiates all benefit packages for employees and retirees.

When browsing through the information on the CMS web site, remember that UIUC employees are considered “State Employees” and are enrolled in the “State Employees Insurance program”. CMS has detailed insurance coverage information as well as claims delays and Benefits Booklets for Benefits Choice periods.

### **State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA)**

**URL:** [www.suaa.org](http://www.suaa.org)

**Phone:** (217) 523-4040

**Address:** 217 East Monroe Street, Suite 100  
Springfield, IL 62701

**Email:** [suaa@suaa.org](mailto:suaa@suaa.org)

SUAA advocates on behalf of SURS retirees, current employees, and their dependents and survivors to preserve retirement and healthcare benefits. Members have special access on the web site. Membership forms available online.

### **MyBenefits Marketplace**

**URL:** <https://mybenefits.illinois.gov/>

**Phone:** (844) 251-1777 or (844)251-1778 (TTY)

MyBenefits is a website designed to help employees or annuitants make changes to their insurance coverage during the Benefits Choice period. Members can also call a State group insurance customer service representative at the number above. This is also where you sign up for TRAIL (Medicare Advantage Plan).

### **TRAIL (Total Retiree Advantage IL)**

**URL:** [illinois.gov/cms/benefits/trail](http://illinois.gov/cms/benefits/trail)

(follow link to “State Insurance Program”)

**Phone:** (844)251-1777 or (844)251-1778 (TTY)  
(same as MyBenefits)

**Fax:** (844) 676-1725

**Email:** [cms.ben.medicarecob@illinois.gov](mailto:cms.ben.medicarecob@illinois.gov)

TRAIL manages a suite of State Medicare Advantage plans for retirees who are eligible for Medicare. The website has open enrollment materials and shows coverage information and monthly costs based on years of service.

### **Social Security and Medicare (Champaign Office)**

**Social Security URL:** [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

**Medicare URL:** [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov)

**Phone:** (877) 819-2593

(800) 325-0778 (TTY)

**Address:** 101 S Country Fair Dr, Champaign

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## *Help Us Recruit New Members to SUAA!!*

SUAA's strength and effectiveness depend directly on the number of members. If you are already a member, please encourage your colleagues, friends, and family members who are SURS participants to join. Show them this newsletter, send them a link to our chapter's website ([www.suaa-ui.org](http://www.suaa-ui.org)), and encourage them to attend a chapter meeting so they can see the work that is being done on their behalf in Springfield and here in Champaign-Urbana.

If you are a user of social media, "like" the SUAA UIUC Facebook page and "share" its postings so your friends can see them. If you are not already a member, we hope that this information will persuade you to join us.

SUAA is **your** voice at the Capitol; SUAA works hard to make your concerns heard loud and clear by state legislators and the Governor's office staff. SUAA provides a communications network through emails, legislative bulletins, websites, and workshops/meetings that informs and updates members on both local and state issues relative to and focused on pension and healthcare benefits.

### **What has SUAA done for you?** (From the SUAA website [suaa.org](http://suaa.org))

#### **STOPPED CONSTITUTIONAL THREATS**

- Represented all SURS participants and beneficiaries by suing the State of Illinois over Senate Bill 1 (Public Act 98-0599), pension reform. The Supreme Court found the law unconstitutional, saving the average pensioner HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS over the course of their
- retirement
- Led the charge to defeat adding a new section to Article XIII of the State Constitution, which would have been an attack on SURS employees and retirees
- Actively lobbied the Legislature to prevent changes to the Constitution that would harm SURS retirees and active members, such as the "pension clause"

#### **PROMOTED HIGHER EDUCATION'S FUTURE**

- Stopped legislation that would create a slippery slope toward abolishing tuition waivers for university personnel, that ultimately could target community colleges next
- Supported legislation in Springfield to strengthen health care and pension benefits for SURS members
- Advocated for protecting and preserving the College Insurance Program (CIP health benefits)
- Protected faculty forced to take furloughs during the state's budget crisis
- Worked to preserve Illinois' higher education system as a critical, quality commodity for Illinois, through the Higher Education Creates Jobs campaign and other advocacy

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**Dues are only \$47 per year – \$39 goes to the state SUAA organization and \$8 stays with our local chapter.**

***If you are already a member of SUAA*** – consider having your dues deducted from your paycheck (if still employed) or your pension (if an annuitant). Your membership will renew automatically each year without your having to write a check or spend money on a stamp. Dues are only \$3.92 per month. When your membership comes up for renewal, complete and sign the bottom of the form to start deducting dues monthly.

***If you are not yet a member*** – visit our web page at [www.suaa-ui.org/join.htm](http://www.suaa-ui.org/join.htm) for easy instructions.



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## ***SUAA Foundation***

*H.F. (Bill) Williamson*

I represent the UIUC SUAA Chapter on the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of the SUAA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that is a separate arm of SUAA. Each chapter of SUAA appoints a Director to the SUAA Foundation Board, and the Board elects the Foundation Executive Committee. The SUAA Foundation has three major purposes:

(1) To provide for education and dissemination of information regarding issues affecting the welfare of members of SUAA. In this regard, the Foundation provided almost the entire funding for the statewide SUAA Education Campaign. It has also funded luncheons at some of the SUAA Annual Meetings in Springfield to cover topics of interest to the members regarding their benefits.

(2) To support those Chapters establishing Survivor Assistance Programs. For this purpose, the staff at the State Office helped the Foundation Directors to design and disseminate a Survivor Assistance brochure to all Chapters. We have also developed an informational bookmark summarizing (a) the documents that should be on file in the SURS office and (b) the first step to be taken if a SURS participant dies.

(3) To provide emergency assistance to SUAA members who are in need of financial support. To meet this purpose, the Foundation Board has approved an Emergency Assistance Program to

provide support for SUAA members who are facing a sudden need for funds to cope with a crisis. Chapter leaders may request assistance of up to \$1500 on behalf of individuals who have been SUAA members for at least five years. If you or someone you know is such an individual, please contact our Chapter President or another member of our Chapter Executive Committee so that the application process can begin.

The newest Foundation activities are a Scholarship Program and a Grant Program. The former offers six scholarships of \$1000 each to applicants who are a SUAA member or the spouse/partner, child/stepchild or grandchild/step-grandchild of a SUAA member. The latter offers two grants of up to \$1000 per grant annually for professional development activities (travel expenses are excluded) for applicants who are SUAA members in good standing and currently employed at an Illinois institution of higher education. Further information on either program is available on the Foundation link at the state SUAA website.

We hope that you will consider providing support to the Foundation so that we can continue these programs. Contributions can be made by mailing a check payable to "SUAA Foundation" to: SUAA Foundation; 217 E. Monroe Street, Suite 100; Springfield, IL 62701. Contributions can also be made by using a credit card through the link available on the state [SUAA website](#).

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### ***Did you get duplicate copies of this newsletter?***

The fall edition of The Annuitant is sent to mailing lists obtained from SURS and from SUAA; the SURS list goes directly to the mailing center and we cannot compare it to the list from SUAA to eliminate duplicates. Pass the extra on to a friend!

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## *In Memoriam*

*Marissa Brewer*

Below is the name, and age at death of each SURS participant from the Urbana-Champaign campus and allied agencies who passed away between January 1, 2021 and June 30, 2021. Source: FOIA request from SURS

*(Note: SURS no longer provides the date of death)*

Aggarwal, Narindar K., 87	Empson, Donald Emory, 80	Krasnow, Doris, 92
Anderson, Laverne S., 65	Evans, E Graham., 78	Kuznetsov, Edward N., 87
Axford, Roy Arthur, 92	Feller, Robert J., 72	Lacey, Marguerite Q., 96
Bannon, Joseph J., 89	Fisher, Jean G., 97	Larson, Carl S., 86
Barcus, Dale A., 80	Fletcher, Alice H., 90	Lauter, Nicholas C., 48
Barenberg, Ernest J., 91	Flowers, Kevin, 65	Lewis, Berdie J., 68
Barrett, Jane W., 71	Frankel, Marvin, 97	Lewis, Philip H., 65
Beak, Peter A., 85	Frith, Donald E., 96	Littlewood, Thomas B., 92
Bee, Charles Mark, 60	Gallion, Rose M., 91	Long, Emilie Kay., 75
Belford, James A., 76	Garvey, John B., 63	Mandelco, Linda C., 71
Bell, Zelda Will., 80	Getz, Mary Ruth., 88	Marfort, Carlos T., 97
Benedino, John J., 89	Gillett, Marjorie J., 86	Mazumder, Jyotirmoy, 69
Bial, Raymond S., 72	Graf, Donald L., 95	McConkie, George W., 83
Bliss, Brian E., 55	Green, Barbara Ann, 72	McCreery, Marilyn Sue., 74
Borders, Ramona P., 94	Griffin, Calvin, 70	McGee, Arvella, 95
Boresi, Arthur P., 96	Griffith, Jessie M., 99	McGrew, Frances M., 79
Boswell, Ronald R., 75	Gulick, Joseph G., 56	McNeese, Wilmena A., 77
Bouck, Gary E., 78	Hall, Alan Bruce, 81	McNeill, Billy B., 86
Breen, Harry F., 90	Hannon, Paul M., 93	Meyer, Doris M., 91
Brown, Michael J., 64	Haring, Mary E., 84	Miller, Marcia J., 81
Brown, Theresa Nourie, 88	Harrington, Matthew E., 39	Mitchell, Cheryl, 56
Buchanan, Virginia L., 77	Harshbarger, Joan T., 72	Morris, Freda Irene., 85
Carothers, Diane F., 93	Hauersperger, Nancee S., 76	Munds, Stella Mae., 91
Carpenter, Anthony J., 59	Heins, Arthur J., 89	Naujokas, Raymond A., 89
Clark, Jesse D., 90	Helms, Lester L., 93	North, Peter J., 81
Collenberger, Mary A., 87	Hendrick, George, 92	Nugent, Dorothy E., 93
Considine, William J., 79	Henry, Nancy M., 69	Ochs, Harry T., 77
Cooper, Gabriele V., 78	Henry, Brian Richard, 63	O'Donnell, Kenneth J., 82
Creek, James E., 83	Hlavna, Winifred M., 98	Osborn, Jean H., 91
Croft, Betty M E., 94	Holderer, Deborah J., 74	Parsons, Mary J., 80
Day, Shari Ann., 55	Hoveltn, Doris M., 87	Patterson, David L., 74
DeHaven, John N., 89	Jacoby, JoAnn, 54	Peacock, Leon, 66
Didenko, Yuri T., 68	Jean, Rutherford J., 78	Phelps, Philip W., 74
Diedrich, Harold K., 83	Kerkhoff, Paul C., 91	Pitcher, Eugene S., 84
Diener, Edward F., 74	Kessler, Thomas James, 90	Pruett, John H., 73
Dumler, Irena, 86	Kirkham, Linda L., 82	Rahn, Deborah K., 61
Duvall, Larry E., 63	Knox, Ronald Robert, 86	Ravenhall, David G., 94
Elliott, Shannon Leigh, 40	Kobel, Aurettia J., 90	<i>(Continued on next page)</i>

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(In Memoriam, continued from  
previous page)

Raymond, Helen C., 75	Sewell, Susan D., 68	Venable, Barbara Kay, 78
Reeder, Kevin James, 64	Sexton, Ronald Raymond., 77	Venkateswaran,
Richardson, Willie L., 71	Shipman, Merrell G., 73	Venkatasubramanian, 69
Rohl, Charles W., 86	Shupp, Franklin Richard, 88	Warfield, Walter H., 74
Rokke, Douglas L., 71	Sievers, Mark E., 72	Warmouth, Tim L., 67
Ronalter, Michael J., 66	Slanker, Barbara Olsen., 86	Webb, Sharon L. A., 75
Rose, Donald J., 88	Sliger, Marina M., 95	Weber, Michael J., 78
Rueter, Glenna E., 83	Snyder, Lewis E., 81	West, Charles K., 84
Rueter, Sandra Jo, 85	Sporleder, Donald Emil, 92	Whitley, Mary J., 83
Ruhter, David L., 69	Stahl, Ronald Duane, 86	Wilson, Debrina J., 64
Russell, Donald R., 45	Stayton, Karen L., 76	Yeazel, Dorothy, 88
Rutledge, Alan R., 58	Streeter, Imogene J., 90	Young, Ernest Landrum, 84
Sani, Robert L., 86	Szoke, Claire O., 83	Young, Martha A., 88
Schriefer, Melvin W., 92	Tarr, James L., 91	Yu, Tao, 39
Schumacher, John C., 89	Tedrick, Nancy A., 82	Zagorski, Edward J., 99
Scott, Barbara A., 91	Townsend, Marsheneal, 94	

### ***UIUC Email System Changes***

If you kept your @illinois.edu email account after retiring from the university, you should be aware that the campus policy on forwarding email to an outside email account has changed.

Many former staff members now use another email system such as Gmail and have elected to forward all mail sent to their Illinois account in order to keep all mail in one place.

However, if you are still on the university payroll in some capacity or if you retain control over any university accounts, **your Illinois email cannot be forwarded to a non-Illinois account.**

You should test whether forwarding still works for you by having someone send an email to your Illinois account and see whether it is forwarded to your new email account. If not, log into your Illinois email account and add an automatic reply stating your new email address.

### ***Zoom connection information for Fall Meeting, October 24***

The Zoom meeting will start at 1:30 pm central time with an informal chat among participants. Program begins at 2 pm. More complete information is also available on the SUAA-UIUC website: [www.suaa-ui.org](http://www.suaa-ui.org)

Join Zoom meeting: [tinyurl.com/74h47jpd](https://tinyurl.com/74h47jpd)

Meeting ID: 853 1030 0484  
Password: 400702

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